

Minutes  
Finance Committee  
Muncie Common Council  
300 North High Street  
Muncie, Indiana 47305

**Monday, September 27, 2021**

**Finance Meeting:** 6:30 P.M., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor City Hall Auditorium.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by Yvonne Thompson, Human Rights Director.

<b>Roll Call:</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Aaron Clark	X	
Ro Selvey	X	
Troy Ingram	X	
Jeff Green	X	
Jeff Robinson	X	
Brandon Garrett	X	
Brad Polk	X	
Jerry Dishman	X	
Anitra Davis	X	

**Order of Business:** Chairman Robinson begins by stating that obviously, the Finance Committee looks a lot different than it has in years past and he is happy to welcome all nine members of the City Council to the process. Each of them have different viewpoints and expertise and he truly believes that they work better together as a unit and as a whole body and certainly, when it comes to their most basic responsibilities, which is as fiscal body. He has explained to the other members prior to tonight's meeting as just a reminder that tonight's meeting, as well as the meeting scheduled for October 11, 2021, is for questions and general inquiry into the budget and each department will discuss and debate any potential amendments or changes to the budget at the Special Meeting scheduled for October 18, 2021. Now, because this is a very hard-working Council/Committee (and assures it really it is) and everyone does their due diligence before the meetings, there is a chance that many of them could have the same questions. That is why he is instructing to follow their Council Rules for this meeting and make sure everybody has an opportunity to ask questions equally. He asks to respect their rules and only ask one question before giving other Committee members the opportunity to ask theirs. Certainly, if you have a follow-up, yes, ask your follow-up to your original question as that is not an issue but he does ask to relinquish the floor to fellow colleagues and ask your own questions afterward. Additionally, something different this year will be the allowance of public comment during these meetings. This is the taxpayers money, after all, and it is important to

allow citizens to have a seat at the table if they so choose. For those interested watching at home and as well as here in the audience tonight, the budget can be found on the City Council page of the City's website ([www.cityofmuncie.com](http://www.cityofmuncie.com)). Robinson wants to make sure, though, when it comes to public comment to stay on topic. He asks that citizens try to limit their time to three (3) minutes and if a citizen has questions (plural) please ask all your questions during your time at the podium. If it is something they cannot answer then they will ask the department head or the appropriate person to answer that question. He would also like to limit follow up questions from citizens as much as possible after answering original questions. He does not want to get into a back and forth, address the council directly, and the council will directly the questions. In closing, he asks the rest of the Committee if there are any questions, concerns or (jokingly) compliments.

### **Building Commissioner**

Chairman Robinson begins by asking if there are anything about the Building Commissioners budget that would like to be shared before opening it up to questions.

Steve Selvey, Building Commissioner, comments just that it is the best budget in front of them and they are down \$94 from last year.

Councilman Dishman questions if they put in for any more employees to help get this City cleaned up. Selvey answer no. Dishman comments there are a lot yards and many buildings that need attention and the Department needs the extra help, he knows they do and would love to see them able to take care of that. Selvey appreciates that but thinks they are getting more done with what they have but does appreciate the support. He explains they do not actually clean it up and believes there is currently an ordinance coming before council that might help with that. He elaborates if they need any funding, it is for the resources to actually do the work. Dishman states he will be one of the councilmembers that will try to get them the tools they need. Selvey suggests getting together to talk about it sometime. Dishman adds that this City has weeds growing all over, on the curbs and sidewalks and stuff like that and he would like to see all that cleaned up. Selvey has had a few discussions with Mayor Ridenour about some of that along with Councilwoman Selvey and Chairman Robinson and there are a couple things that they can further talk about that could truly enhance the City. Dishman mentions he would like to see the contractors that are waiting to get their permits signed so they can move on in their process fast-forwarded too. If the Office needs the help, he requests him to please not hesitate to come before this Council. Selvey thanks him. Dishman appreciates what Selvey does because he has seen some of the stuff that they were able to accomplish and appreciates what he and his office does for this City.

Councilwoman Davis has two questions but will start with one. Robinson informs her that if the second one isn't a follow up, they will come back to her once everyone else has had the chance to ask a question. Davis confirms and asks how many part-time laborers the Building Commissioner has. Selvey answers right now,



they only have one (1) but actually managed to get five (5) hired this summer during the mowing season. He explains that was their objective and it took a lot more work to get to five than he ever anticipated but they achieved that and worked five part-time employees for six weeks with losing a couple along the way. In all honestly, the wages are terrible and the office cannot attract help. They were fortunate to get what they got. That is something that this Council needs to figure out because they are stymie. Davis asks how much those part-time employees make right now. Selvey answers \$11.75, which is the maximum, adding those are his thoughts, unaware if it is the same as the Mayors or the Councils.

Craig Wright, City Controller, informs that there is an ordinance coming before council to fix the part-time pay. The ordinance will raise it to \$15.00 an hour as long as they stay within budget so he confirms that is already being addressed.

Chairman Robinson brings up ordinance 42-21 covering the Vacant and Abandoned Structures and Property Registration and enlightens this office really doing the heavy lifting on that ordinance. Selvey confirms it is all them. Robinson indicates his question is (really) if they anticipate needing more funding to execute that and if there is anyone in the office that is going to be doing additional work to execute that ordinance. Selvey has given some really good thought and consideration to that and this more or less falls under the umbrella of the Unsafe Building Hearing Authority (it is a hybrid). He continues to explain what they have done is broken out something that really causes consternation aggravation in the City and that is dealing with a landlord that is 2,000 miles away and people buying property on pure speculation. He hopes it helps and expects it to a little but to get to the immediate of the question, Selvey thinks at this point in time there is somebody that he is really high on and thinks would do a great job with this. He thinks they can manage without bringing somebody else on board and is very confident in that. As far as resources, from an administrative point, they might need about \$10,000, \$12,000 or \$15,000... He doesn't know. There is paper, pencils, any recordings needing done at the Council Building, incidentals, etc. Selvey thinks that is a bargain and is excited about this and will do whatever he can to make it a success and a good time for everybody. Robinson acknowledges that they haven't voted on it as a council yet but thinks the sentiment from the council is that this is something that is desperately needed. He wants to make sure that whatever the council is putting on the administration (or in this case the Building Commissioners Department) that they have the resources to be able to execute that to the fullest extent. That should be considered and is something they should all be thinking about is who is going to be doing this and are they compensated fairly and maybe there is an opportunity to help out in that respect since someone is going to be taking on so much more work. Selvey clarifies that this ordinance is coming up next week. The committee confirms. Selvey suggest that maybe once that gets approved, maybe that is something that they can visit collectively on. Selvey adds that he has a person in mind but hasn't announced it yet so doesn't do so here.

Councilwoman Davis has a question regarding Securing Properties (line #101-10-439196) and notices there is \$15,000 in the budget. She asks if he thinks he is able to

secure all the properties that they need to secure within the year with that amount of money. Selvey states yes, in looking at where they are at right now, he recalls asking the Property Preservation Foreman how high the ceiling was because they are going to jam it full of plywood because they spent very little money. Selvey indicates they bought material before the plywood and lumber spiked and had enough to get through this but it is starting to come down now. He guesses based on past experience that what they have left over this year that they will spend this year in preparations for winter. So, yes, Selvey answers they have plenty.

Chairman Robinson recalls him mentioning (to Councilman Dishman's point) they have talked several times about weed control and things like that around the City and what they might be able to do to get that taken care of. In those conversations, Selvey informed Robinson about a partnership with Urban Life Church. Selvey states that Joy Redinger really knocked it out of park. He gives credit where credit is due. He explains the Mayor provided some EDIT funding that was almost matched with a CenterPoint Foundation grant while he just watched. In all honestly, Selvey didn't think it would work but she knocked it out of the park and just put together a great model. She went to the neighbors and paid a pretty significant sum of money to mow forty-three lots. How simple is that? People that are directly affected by this. Selvey mentions that they in the Building Commissioners office is not set up to do this as it is not a money or a resource thing. He states they are the City, not Landscapers. The way the ordinance is set up is just fine but grass on the north side, south side, east side, west side, it all gets up to twelve inches at the same time going from zero to negative thousands. Selvey states that Joy did this for \$250, a lot, and that is getting these lots mowed up to ordinance (where it never got above 12 inches). Those that live around these neighborhoods and as Dishman said, people see it all the time. This is great investment. Selvey has talked to the Mayor and express if the council is willing to support this, he will do this but he will do this under one circumstance. He confers he does not do and will not do admin money. He refers to Joy from Urban Light and states that she didn't do it. He wants it to pursue this and go right into the community. There are some things he is not that familiar with, such as the 8Twelve Coalition or Whitley but it seems like there's some structures in place. He even reached out to Joy and suggested if they can get her some more money to continue growing it but not get silly. Robinson adds that they want to scale it up proportionally and they don't want to put her in position where she can't get it done. Robinson states if he remembers right and to please correct him if he is wrong but that was about \$13,600. Selvey confirms it was and of that, \$2,420 was spent to knock down the first mow which is well over 12 inches. That is what they, the Building Commissioners office, can do and really, they should. If the council is looking at doing anything, Selvey thinks this would be great. Robinson thinks when you have citizens who are willing to step up and do that and it's a benefit to those citizens that are receiving the money to mow the yard, they are benefiting twice. They are getting their neighbors yard taken care of that looks horrible and they're getting a little bit of money in their pocket so he is all in favor of increasing that. He would just want to make sure that



Joy Redinger is able and willing to expand and to look within (maybe) the 8Twelve Coalition, Whitely and things like that. From his perspective, and he is only one member up here, he thinks that is a phenomenal program that we ought to not only continue but look to expand as well. Selvey states it is the simple most obvious thing that hasn't been thought of since 1865.

Councilwoman Davis adds that she serves on the Board of Urban Light CDC and that was the Adopt-A-Lot Program. Her and Joy met with the Mayor who agreed to match the dollars that she already had a grant for and it really made a significant difference in the neighborhood. The neighbors stepped up and were more willing to keep the grass cut. They did a professional mow that first mow and kept it up. It is an excellent program, she agrees. She is glad that everyone was on board and the Mayor for being on board originally. No further questions.

## **Mayor**

Chairman Robinson begins by asking if there is anything specific about the Mayor's budget that he would like to share before opening it up to questions.

Dan Ridenour, Mayor of Muncie, expresses the only thing he will say is that Steve Selvey might be biggest cut in his budget, so far, however, the Mayor's budget is cut even more (slightly). Most of the budget is exactly the same with no increases in the Department of the total dollars. Actually, they were able to decrease the total dollars in what the 2021 budget calls for and what they are wanting to do in 2022. Mayor Ridenour did take three areas where they reduced the funds (where they could see that there was an opportunity) and three areas to increase the funds. The net effect was a negative to the Department (he believes \$243) that stays in the General Fund. However, the Mayor thinks that is nice. Other than that, no, he does not have anything else. Again, the overwhelming majority of these lines stayed the same from one year to the next.

Councilman Clark questions if the Mayor sees his Part-Time (line # 101-01-411046) increasing with this possible ordinance coming up. Mayor Ridenour thinks there could be an opportunity to have Abbey, who is the part-time Receptionist, to and her assistance be utilized to Steve and the Building Commissioner's office. She is at twenty-eight (28) hours or less a week so, for example, she was not in at all today but there could be times where the certainly she could help pitch in. In addition, he thinks it's important. No further questions.

## **Channel 60 Public Access**

Chairman Robinson indicates there was no increase or decrease in this budget.

Anthony Sandleben, Channel 60 Public Access, takes the opportunity to properly apologize to Chairman Robinson and Councilwoman Selvey for dunking them at the City's dunk tank at the \$2 Tour of the Village. Right at the onset of budget season, probably wasn't a smart move. On to business, this was pretty much a straight

forward budget from last year with no increase or decrease. He comments that they liked it before and if it isn't broke... No further questions.

## Finance Division

Chairman Robinson assumes this is going to be the biggest cost-cutting measure.

Craig Wright, City Controller, explains they pretty much stayed the same but did make a cut in Other Insurance (line # 101-04-434011) by quite a bit. Besides that, there were no changes. Wright comments that he had an old boss named Sal that was a Regional Director years ago. In traveling and meeting up in Louisville, Wright asked him what he could do to help out and Sal replied that he "could definitely spend more money." So, he has always been that way. If he can save a buck, he will.

Robinson, in speaking of spending money, wanted to ask if there are any special projects, anything that he would like to see (or could be done) in the Department to make things more efficient to help the team. Is there anything that comes to mind such as something they have been wanting to do but just haven't had the money.

Wright states nothing comes to mind, however, he will say in defense to his team that he has an extremely tenured Department. They are all very, very efficient and do a great job in what they do with many years of experience. The only thing that (maybe) he would change is occasionally have a part-time person come in and (kind of) pick up the slack during all the vacations. That would be on his wish list and his employees would probably agree with that. They are a hard-working group of people that is very tenured and very knowledgeable and Wright appreciates every single one of them. Robinson requests that between now and October 18th, if Wright would provide the Council a cost estimate of what it might take to bring in a part-time person. As a reminder to everyone at home and here, Robinson explains the Council can decrease line items in the budget at their discretion, however, cannot increase items at their discretion and those take executive approval. If Wright provides a cost estimate of what that might take and perhaps that is something that the Council and Mayor can consider together and be able to provide for the Department.

Councilman Clark indicates this may or may not be for the Controller but asks if insurance, as a whole for the City, goes through Wright's department when quoting it out. Wright states it does go through his department and also through Melanie. She is a big part of that and they always look to try to save money where they can. As far as giving good quality services and better services but then again this is able to save money. Clark asks if this is an annual review the office might do. Wright answers yes, they do either.

Councilwoman Selvey questions who Melanie is. Wright indicates Melanie Lynch who takes care of the benefits and is actually with the Sanitary District.

Councilman Ingram questions Employee uniforms (line item #101-04-413036). Wright laughingly states they do not spend that. It is budgeted for AFSCME but they do not spend it and per the AFSCME contract, it has to be in there. Robinson clarifies it reverts to the General Fund. Wright answers yes. No further questions.



**Parks Department**

Chairman Robinson asks if there is anything about the Parks budget that should be shared with the Committee before opening it up to questions.

Carl Malone, Parks Superintendent, indicates they have three (3) year round staff but this year had about eight (8) seasonal workers to maintain about 275 acres day in and day out. Malone would like to see about being able to add (maybe) three or four part-time employees' year around to help maintain City Parks as they have added a couple more parks to their list of existing parks. There has been a move from the Working Foreman and maybe they would want to look at that some time to see how effective that might be. Those are some things he can think of that would be the Working Foreman and maybe adding three part-time people.

Chairman Robinson states the same with Wright, to get the council a cost estimate of what that might be to add three or four part-time people. It will be something they will take under consideration and work with the Mayor to see if they can make that happen.

Councilman Ingram acknowledges the Mayor creating a lot more attractions and stuff in the parks along with the stuff they already have and asks what Malone has done in his budget to help prepare for that. Malone indicates they have had some conversations about improvements needed for the upcoming year. With 2022 coming up, Riverside and things of that nature is what they might need and added some extra money for park improvements as far as playground equipment. After an inventory of (some) of the parks, they could see there was a need to replace some equipment. He is unsure if any councilmembers have been out to any of the City Parks but they do have a lot of old equipment that needs to come out. There is a cost and they need to try and look to see where they can find monies for that. The tennis courts, for example, they thought they could resurface and save but after receiving some quotes, Heekin Park came in at around \$82,000 to repair and fix. In that aspect, they are trying to figure out ways to apply for grants or find some monies out there through resources that may allow them to be able to come up with a way to get those things put into the budget.

Councilman Clark thinks in particular with utility cost, bringing on board the splash pads, which are pumps and motors, and running continuously. He asks if there has been a plan to work on that funding. Malone explains they have had some discussions and received the water bills from existing parks' year round services. They are trying to figure out what that is going to look like to be able to cover the cost for that. Clark adds that it is a mirror image of 2021. Malone replies and something they will have to consider, the cost for adding the water and electric to those two parks and adds that they just turned some of that documentation into the Controller's Office just last week.

Councilwoman Selvey refers to Equipment Rental Repair & Maintenance line and asks if it would be feasible for the Parks Department to actually buy some of this

equipment and keep it instead of to keep renting it from places. Malone answers yes, it would be nice if they could have a line item in their budget for purchasing equipment. As he said, it has been years since they have been able to purchase their own but he thinks they can move in the right direction towards that.

Councilman Garrett questions how long it has been since the Parks Department purchased any heavy equipment. Malone answers just last year, they were able to purchase two vehicles, a Trash Truck which has been very helpful and a Peterson Truck that they use throughout the Park system and has been very helpful with Urban Forestry. He recalls the previous Administration began working on putting something together and then as they came in, they were able to get this council to support it. It has been a big help to have their own Trash Truck to run through the parks. Garrett compliments the parks look nice and thanks him. Malone replies they try to make them look as beautiful as they can. There is still a lot more work ahead of them but they are out there every day trying to improve.

Councilwoman Davis is thinking about part-time employees and recalls Malone saying there being some very life-long part-time employees. She asks if they are at a point to where they can move a part-time employee into a full-time position where they can get benefits and things like that. She just thinks about those things during a pandemic. Malone declares they have two that has been there eight years and another that has been there about ten years. They all come to work every day and go above and beyond the call of duty. One in particular person does the playground Certification Inspection in the Department and also runs their trash route. Malone hopes that is something they can sit down and talk about how to move those individuals into full-time spots as it would really be a plus to the Department. He adds both of those guys are good workers and have dedicated to the Parks Department in a part-time status.

Selvey asks a follow-up of what would be the most the most effective and efficient piece of equipment where it would help with the budget. In other words, if he had a wish list, what would be on it? Malone answers forklift would be something he thinks the Park Department could use. Many times, they are out there trying to lift and move bleachers and things of that nature with six, seven or eight people together. Something that would help them move heavy equipment would be helpful.

Chairman Robinson acknowledges something new in this budget coming up which is an Assistant Urban Forester (line # 201-27-411110). In wanting to make it clear for the Committee and those that do not know, Robinson asks Malone to explain the pay structure for how that is. Malone indicates that the City is paying half and their full-time Urban Forester that is in the department is paying half. He thinks this person coming on that they are looking at would be similar to that position, of course, if it gets in the budget and final approval. He knows Urban Forester Kelly McClellan does the best she can with what she has but having another person there to help assist would greatly help because there are both trees in the City/Streets and in the Parks. A lot of times, Parks get pushed aside and there are trees that need to be addressed. Robinson requests to fill them in on what that Assistant Urban Forester's job



responsibilities are going to be. Malone states they would definitely go throughout the Parks and inspect all the dead trees there is. There are trees that fall all the time and Kelly just can't quite get to them. This employee would take on the duties that she normally would and assist on cases where she cannot, both on the streets and in the parks. Ultimately, anything the Urban Forester would ask them to do, the Assistant Forester would do.

Ingram clarifies it is \$38,814 for the Assistant Urban forester and asks if that is going to be the total salary. Malone answers that is the total. Ingram confirms the total the employee will be making in the year or is that the total that the City is paying. Malone assures that is the total per year. Ingram then clarifies that \$19,407 would be the half the City would pay. Malone answers yes. Clark adds that could be an amendment they later make. Ingram states since the City is only providing half of that, the Department has the full salary budgeted.

Craig Wright, Controller, explains they did budget for the full salary and will be getting half of it back. That is in the budget and they will be paying \$19,400 which is half. One of the things this person will be doing is being a big help with the '1000 Trees in 1000 Days' project because the trees have to be watered on a weekly basis which takes up a lot of time. Wright continues with a couple things that he wanted to add to the budget that the Committee may not be aware of. They did increase Capital Equipment (line #201-27-44071) in the budget up to \$100,000 this year for next year. That will help with the purchase of some of the larger needed equipment. Also discussing playground equipment, the Playground Equipment Maintenance (line # 201-27-422125) was increased an additional \$40,000 up to \$100,000.

Chairman Robinson advises they did not know which person would be more appropriate to ask (Malone or Wright) but since they are both up here now, he expresses the Committee feels good about all the revenue coming in to the Parks Department. Robinson, specifically, is curious about the Tuhey Pool Rental (line #201-27-411082) of \$10,000 and asks if there is something slated for next year that will provide for rental of Tuhey Pool. Malone explains at the end of the year, they sat down and talked with Tuhey about seeing if they wanted to enter back into the partnership. It varies from membership to membership on terms of revenue that they split. It really depends on if the Y agrees to go forward for each year. This year, it was a little slower and they were down in numbers verses the year before. Robinson notices increases in Park Cabin Rental (just \$5,000) and the Park Department Damage Deposit (line # 201-27-439135). In terms of the damage deposit, he guesses when somebody rents a cabin, they pay a damage deposit, come in/do whatever they plan to do with the cabin and when they are finished, the Department goes into access and if there is damage, they keep that damage deposit to make necessary repairs. Malone confirms. Robinson advises he just had Park Department Damage Deposit as revenue so questions if Malone anticipates bringing in much more than that but perhaps using \$20,000 and asks for some explanation. Malone explains he does not anticipate any problems going forward as far as repairs. They have not had any major repairs from anybody that has rented cabins, although some here and there throughout the years but nothing major

that has resulted in repairs needing to be done. Robinson thinks and based off the comments made by Councilman Clark and Councilman Ingram, when it comes to the Urban forester, he would prefer to see that grant funding coming in shown in revenue coming into the Parks Department – just so it is known that that revenue is coming in. Also, he questions if the council needs to create this position by ordinance. Wright answers this position and the Civilian Paramedic/EMT position is going to be proposed in November and December.

Councilwoman Selvey requests information on Mechanic B and for Malone to explain what that person does. Malone indicates Mechanic B has been with the Parks for several years and transferred over from the Street Department. He takes care of all of the work on the equipment and does whatever is needed for the vehicles, lawnmowers and anything else that is asked of him. His actual title is Mechanic B. Selvey confirms they have one. Malone answers yes and he stays busy all the time. Ingram asks about Mechanic A and Malone suggests that maybe he is at the Street Department. No further questions.

Chairman Robinson informs that the schedule of the department head budget presentations was made prior to the realization of the date of the IRONMAN. With that upcoming, Prairie Creek is very busy so after talking with Dustin Clark yesterday, it was agreed to move the Prairie Creek budget presentation to the next Finance Committee Meeting scheduled for October 11th. That gives them a little bit of time to breath after the event.

## **Beech Grove**

Mike Miller, Beech Grove Cemetery Superintendent, thanks Councilman Clark and Chairman Robinson for coming to visit the other day and appreciates them taking an interest. There is nothing, really, too much that he would like to share. On the October Regular Meeting Agenda there is a resolution to transfer some money to part-time and explains they have really had a tough time with Covid and people calling off for an extended period of time so they had an extra part-time person this year and that is what that is for. He didn't ask for any additional money next year and Miller states he worked on his 2022 budget alongside the Controller and the Mayor and it is basically the same thing from last year.

Councilman Ingram informs he has received multiple complaints about the quality of care that Beech Grove Cemetery has been given. He has several people who are very upset at the upkeep and things that are going on and asks what Miller has done in this budget to make sure that is not going to happen again and Miller states he has not changed the budget in regards to that – it is the same. Ingram asks how he plans to not let that happen next year. Miller answers they had a really tough time with Covid this year and missed a lot of man hours for multiple weeks which made it really difficult. He is hoping they aren't going to have that next year but there is no way of knowing that, obviously. Ingram asks how many Groundskeepers he employs.



Miller states one (1) Full-Time Groundskeeper and then two (2) Operators and one (1) Maintenance person in addition to part-time employees. Ingram asks how many part-time. Miller replies this year, he had five (5) and is why he brought the extra person on to basically do all the trimming, which came after they started getting some complaints in. It was an extremely wet spring and summer so when it started to dry out, they were able to start getting caught up. Unfortunately, it started raining again and it just keeps coming. People think their daily maintenance things are just things that go annually or monthly it but takes two weeks to completely mow the Cemetery. Nothing is going to get mowed more often than two weeks unless they get more employees.

Councilwoman Selvey states they found that Mechanic A (line # 215-31-411067) was in the Beech Grove budget and wants to know what that person is responsible for. Miller states they have four (4) pick-up trucks, a dumb truck and seven (7) mowers. That employee is constantly taking care of those and keeping them running. Then, there is some other smaller equipment such as trimmers and chainsaws and all those type of things that he works on as well. He stays very busy and helps mow, too, when opportunity is given. When he says that they have one Groundskeeper, technically, position-wise is what they have but everybody helps mow (like the backhoe operators) and at some point, all seven mowers are running.

Councilwoman Davis questions how much the part-time workers are paid. Miller answers \$10.10. They had the opportunity to raise it this year but he did not so he could bring on another person. Davis questions full-time. Miller affirms another part-time employee. He has the same number of full-time people as he has always had. Davis asks if Miller thinks he would get more workers if he had an increased salary. Miller explains he is not having a problem with the workers; he is having a problem with the number of workers. If he had more part-time people, that would be helpful but if he did, he would not be able to keep them. Sometimes, they start late March, April 1st and almost every year since he has been there the last six years, they have ran through December 2nd (at least) as far as doing outside work. Davis confirms that Miller has not had a problem keeping those part-time workers. Miller states no and that he is not proud to say they are only paying \$10.10 an hour but they have stayed around.

Chairman Robinson recalls when he and Councilman Clark came out and met with Miller last week, something he learned was with the full-time staff that he has, he has some issues in the summer with vacation time and things like that. Miller is sure that the City as a whole with any long-term employees would have the same problem. Robinson continues that Miller mentioned he was moving some stuff around to provide for additional part-time. No, Miller indicates he is moving it so they can keep the part-time through the fall. He wants to move money from the equipment line into part-time for this year and (hopefully) purchase some equipment next year. However, to get through the fall this year, they need to move some money to part-time just in order to maintain what they have been able to do.

Councilman Clark appreciates the time Miller gave him and Chairman Robinson and thinks that they, as a Council, want to see him succeed. They also have to

represent their constituents and their desire to see expectations met that they have for Beech Grove Cemetery. Clark thinks at some point, Miller and the Beech Grove Cemetery Board need to meet with the Mayor and Controller to put together (maybe) a mitigation plan. Clark affirms that is just a recommendation for his success and recalls the state of the facilities being in dire need of repair, the roads needing paved and equipment being so dated. Clark wouldn't work half of the equipment they have out there. He thinks the need is great he doesn't think that the budget reflects what is needed. Clark advises he is fiscally conservative when it comes to the budgeting but when he looks at beautification for this City, he think it is a huge missed opportunity to overlook our parks and green spaces (even though it is a cemetery). Miller agrees that it is much like a park. Clark continues and knows Miller has a desire to see it that way but wants his budget to reflect that. He hopes that he can meet and work with the board to change this. Miller explains, as he mentioned the other day, they have been in the works on trying to get things done for several years now and there are many that is coming. They just so happen to be in a position to take advantage of that because it has been years trying to get ready. There has been some serious water problems but they have a contract to get the office repaired so eventually that can be offered as another source of revenue for the City. Clark knows they all have been working very hard but he thinks it has come to a point to say, "I need help" and the Council wants to help. Miller appreciates that. Clark thinks about the founders that are buried there, the veterans that are buried there and their family members and we, as a City, deserve to give them the respect of that through the beautification and the upkeep of it. Miller doesn't disagree, informing they just re-did the entrances in the back and front, off both Nichols and Kilgore. Clark adds that he drives through monthly, if not weekly, just to look. Miller thanks him and states anything they can do, the Department would be appreciative of. No further questions.

## Personnel

Marlene Mitchell (Personnel Secretary) and Mikah Wilson (new Personnel Director) approach the committee and Mitchell states this is a transition and Wilson adds that Mitchell has been doing the work. She is the full-time Secretary in the Personnel Department and Wilson starts at the Personnel Director on October 4th. That means she hasn't yet began this work but is looking forward to the fact that there is a lot of work to do and she wants to be helpful to the citizens, City employees and this Council in how she does her job. Mitchell is a wonderful full-time Secretary who has done wonderful work and could probably answer questions Wilson might not yet have knowledge of. Mitchell thanks and welcomes Wilson and the only thing she could say from the time she has been there that whatever has been budgeted/spent looks fine to her. She is going to make some suggestions that they utilize their training money more and keep track of their computer and printers and any updates. At this point, it does not look like they need anything, except Mitchell needs a desktop printer.



Chairman Robinson questions how long Mitchell has been with the Personnel Department. Mitchell replies she has been with Personnel since February. In the absence of the previous Director, she has been filling in. Now, she has to give that part up but she is still there as the HR Assistant.

Councilwoman Selvey has heard nothing but praises about Mitchell and how she has helped maintain and keep the Department going. She wouldn't even want to approach her as a Secretary and thinks she is a Boss, a real Boss. Hats off to her and thank you for sticking with that Department and keeping everything going.

Councilman Ingram thinks it's very important to always strive to better the services provided for the employees of the City in the HR Department. He asks if they still feel like they will be able to improve that service to the employees with the current budget. Mitchell states her concern is going to be what she said earlier, utilizing the training part of it. There is money there and it doesn't like they used very much last year - although it was a Covid year but they did the year before. She recalls just a few weeks ago, her and Alvin (Personnel Specialist) did a Covid training. She thinks if they utilized that a little bit more they could make the Department a little more efficient and run better. Ingram, too, has heard nothing but great things and is going to lean to believe that she will definitely do everything she can to provide better services for the employees and thanks her.

Councilwoman Davis questions if Mitchell has been in HR for a long time, prior to this position. Mitchell states she worked seventeen years in Personnel at BorgWarner and then spent twenty-five years at Ball State in athletics. She does have some background in Personnel and HR. Davis thinks there should be a meeting with someone about her role in HR unless she chooses not to. Mitchell chooses not to and states she is retired. She initially came on as part-time, temporary, and then the full-time came on. Like she told everybody else, it was an opportunity to help her three grandchildren in college and they will be done in a couple years. Wilson acknowledges that Mitchell is a tremendous resource.

Selvey states there is a doubling of a Secretary salary/amount and just wants an explanation. Mitchell confirms that Selvey is talking about Secretary 3 and Selvey states yes. Mitchell explains that is basically herself and her position but she is considered HR Assistant (she thinks). Wilson asks if Selvey is looking at the year-to-date expenditure. Mitchell adds all she sees is Personnel Director, Personnel Specialist and Secretary 3. Mitchell states she is getting what is called Secretary 3 pay. Wilson adds that last year, they eliminated the part-time position to add a full-time Secretary so that could be what she is looking at.

Davis congratulates Wilson on her new role. Chairman Robinson adds that they are very excited for her. Mitchell states she is too. Robinson acknowledges that she knows the entire council well and if she needs anything or any assistance to let them know and they are happy to have her in that position. Wilson, in return, thanks them for their service.

Controller, Craig Wright, personally thanks Mitchell for doing a great job stating she and Alvin do a lot of the behind the scenes work. In reference to the training,

Wright indicates they did budget for \$2,000 this year but unfortunately, they have only used 4% of it. They should have plenty going forward and will just need to utilize it. No further questions.

### **Human Right's Commission**

Yvonne Thompson, Human Rights Director, thanks the committee and mentions that the council has always supported the Human Rights Commission and she appreciates that. It has been fourteen years for her and she appreciates the council and Mayor support. Chairman Robinson expresses that they appreciate what she does and that she does a very important job acknowledging her looking out for others.

Councilwoman Davis wants to know in terms of diversity if there is anything that Thompson thinks the City may need or benefit from through the Human Rights Department that would potentially help moving forward. Thompson knows that diversity training is done but done through Sanitation, she believes. She knows there has been sexual harassment training (from her understanding) through HR so those kinds of things are being done. If Human Rights is asked to do it, they will do it. Their budget is the same as it was last year so they try to spend whatever money they are allotted to the best of their ability to make sure the people of Muncie are covered and heard. Davis refers to their conversations and asks if Thompson thinks that a diversity study would be important. Thompson exuberantly stats yes, it would be very important. Davis mentions she has been looking at the City of Lawrence and some other cities and it is something she thinks would benefit us and just wanted to make sure that Thompson agreed. Thompson states that herself, Davis, Clark, Robinson and Selvey have all been involved with trying to make sure that the City of Muncie is touching base with everyone that wants to participate in projects with the City of Muncie. There always have been challenges but (she thinks) they have taken a really big step forward and that's making sure they partner with other businesses that are minority-owned, black-owned, women-owned, disability-owned and veteran-owned. The reach is a lot further out in comparison to what it used to be. Thompson also wants to thank Ball State's Purchasing Department as they have really helped extend the City of Muncie's reach to other businesses - businesses that more than likely would not have been given a chance. She appreciates that and all of the help with that too.

Robinson guesses it is third party business that does those diversity studies and questions the roundabout cost associated with that and if there is an opportunity to partner with Ball State to provide for that. He then recalls that being the ordinance where they had some data but not all of the data to be able to make a truly informed decision but thinks it's something that all of them on Council and (he knows) the Administration have been passionate about to find out if there is an area where they can help. If an ordinance providing (kind of) a benchmark works for DBE businesses that we work with on Public Works projects, if that's needed, then it is something they would all want to provide. He asks if there is a way to find out how much something like that would cost or how they could go about that. Thompson answers who actually



does that study is a third party vendor with the State of Indiana (the Administration Division) and she can find out what that third-party has charged the State and see what that cost would be.

Councilwoman Selvey wants to thank Thompson because what she has done is amazing and it is a model for other cities to emulate. She just feels like all this hard work has not gotten the attention that it needs and pointing to the City of Muncie Communication Director, thinks Thompson should toot her own horn sometimes. It's really breaking new ground. Selvey thanks her for her hard work and her partnerships and asks her to please put it out there more to let everybody know what we are doing in Muncie.

Thompson, in closing, states she is happy to see the City of Muncie reach out to more vendors and people that more than likely, again, would have never been spoken to or would have never been reached. She is happy to see the City of Muncie do this and expects big things out of this new reach and new partnership. She is always trying to put Muncie on the map. No further questions.

Richard Ivy, Deputy Mayor, wishes to add a follow-up on the previous discussion with Ms. Thompson and states the impact of that resolution and the City of Muncie reaching out (through Thompson and himself) has impacted some minority businesses and who are now on the path to become DBE's with the State. He explains it is strongly encouraged that with ones they come in contact with but there are other businesses, not just minority, that have never even had the door opened to them to be in or be receptive. This actually opens that door for all vendors, including those wanting to become DBE's and putting them on that path to where they can register with the State. This allows them to be pulled and checked out and able to vet them to the extent they need to vet them before doing business. Deputy Mayor Ivy just wanted to let the committee know that it has had an impact. Also, on the training side, they have reached out to Schafer Leadership Academy... He explains that when he came on board with the City, he realized there was many supervisors that have probably had training in the past but needed some refurbishing or updating of that training. So, he and the HR Department reached out to Schafer Leadership Academy who came in and spoke with the supervisors and did personal interviews with each supervisor on what they thought the City was lacking, what they need, what they did for training themselves and what they felt like their peers needed training on. A package was then put together with Schafer Leadership Academy that unfolded and came as an assessment through SLA and some advice on what trainings the City needed to take. He and the Mayor signed off on that last week and now, they are figuring out how to pay for that after making the commitment to it.

Chairman Robinson states Schafer Leadership Academy does great work and has heard they are second to none. In closing, Deputy Mayor Ivy states they will be coming before council to appropriate that money, probably into the HR Department, because with Ivy being from the HR arena, he would like to see that training being managed, monitored and updated as needed through the HR Department. As a matter of

department head change, that needs to be re-evaluated, as far as the training goes. It appears they will be able to get that started this fall and pay for it out of this year's budget. That is why he wanted to make sure to add those pieces of information tonight. No further questions.

**Recess:**

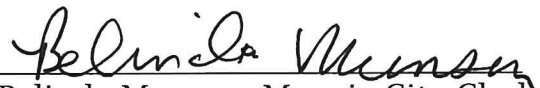
A motion was made by Polk and seconded by Ingram to Recess until the October 11, 2021 Finance Committee Meeting. A vote by acclamation showed 9 yeas and 0 nays.

**Adjourned.**



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Jeff Robinson, Chairman of the  
Finance Committee of the  
Muncie Common Council



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Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk  
of the Muncie Common Council